Milestone Report – May 2011 – Arthur Miller School

**ePortfolios**

ePortfolios at Arthur Miller are being used as an online tool to document and share teacher learning within ICT. Our eventual intention of course is to roll out ePortfolios for all students, but before we can teach this tool to children we decided we had to put the product through a rigorous test by using it ourselves. With this goal in mind we have set up individual ePortfolios for all teachers and they are currently using them as a reflective journal of their ICT learning journey.

As a staff we decided on Spike@School as our provider, after our ICT team attended this product’s workshop during the recent Learning@School conference and agreed that it seemed simple and flexible enough for all staff to quickly get to grips with. We particularly like the modular design and consistent workflow, thinking that this would decrease the potential learning curve for students.

Our common ICT goal is for teachers to become more comfortable, effective and responsive when integrating new ICT into their class programme. Developing and testing ePortfolios, with student users in mind, has this goal woven throughout it.

To make the use of ePortfolios less of a burden we have scheduled a specific time slot for them within our regular staff meetings. Thirty minutes is set aside at each meeting for all teachers to make an entry into their ePortfolio reflective journal. This process began at the start of Term 2. We have started simple with users adding a new reflective blog post each fortnight. Each reflective post follows an agreed format, aligned with our school and cluster goals. Teachers discuss what they have been doing recently with ICT, the challenges they have faced and where they see themselves going next. Where to next is our other main theme. The question we are constantly asking ourselves is how can this new tool be of greatest benefit to my students.

As the comfort level and familiarity with ePortfolios grows we will introduce other components, such as images, video clips and embedded items, so that all teachers eventually get to know their way around the whole Spike@School system.

Teachers have been made aware that any content within their ePortfolio’s reflective journal is publicly available and may be shared with others. We are encouraging teachers to view their colleague’s reflective journals, looking for commonalities and sharing triumphs and frustrations by leaving comments on the journal of a fellow staff member.

[**http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Su-HEHKfe4**](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Su-HEHKfe4) **- View at 1080p**

**Digital Citizenship**

Earlier this year we conducted several sessions during our staff meetings on the topic of Digital Citizenship.

We began by searching for a shared definition of Digital Citizenship and what this might mean to and how it could affect teachers, students and whanau. After some robust discussion and exchange of ideas we arrived at an agreed definition, unique to our school. As we consider this definition to be a work in progress we have purposely created it in general terms, to give ourselves room for it to evolve and grow, or shrink, as technology and attitudes change.

We created a visual metaphor using circles within a circle to reflect the interconnected nature of technology and our daily interactions with and around it.

[**http://prezi.com/2\_umvvcnnwdu/digital-citizenship/**](http://prezi.com/2_umvvcnnwdu/digital-citizenship/)

The concepts and ideas included within our definition reflect what we are doing daily with our students. Our students are taught about the ethics of commenting on blogs, how to use a variety of ICT tools, particularly Web 2.0 tools such as Wallwisher and Glogster and they are learning about tools fit for purpose, rather than simply surface gloss. The most important result is for all of our students to understand how they can use technology effectively and ethically to achieve impact and share their learning and skills with a potentially global audience.

Our next step in the digital citizenship process is to take these ideas and definition to our school community, canvassing their opinions and ideas and modifying or adding to it as necessary. Once our definition is ratified we can implement a more systematic and formal policy that directly reflects the values, skills and aspirations of our school community.

**Lead Teacher**

As the ICT lead teacher at Arthur Miller I see my role essentially as head instigator and chief explorer. I am here to introduce, encourage, cajole and celebrate teachers, management and students’ use of ICT as a powerful tool for learning.

I understand and am passionate about the possibilities and power of ICT and I seek to make this attitude contagious across our school community.

My main mission this year is to demonstrate the potential for student and whanau involvement and learning ownership offered by ePortfolios. From a tutor perspective I have set staff up with their personal ePorftolio and guided them through the process of posting reflections. This guidance will be ongoing as I introduce new features and functionality and we discuss the best ways to use these tools.

I will model commenting on others ePortfolios to discuss pedagogy and common issues and successes, using my own ePortfolio as an example and sharing tips and tricks wherever possible.

As a staff we are constantly using and assessing new software and hardware tools, then sharing our ideas, successes and challenges with colleagues. One of our shared goals for all staff this year is to become confident and competent in the use of their Activboard, ensuring that it is utilized in a manner which makes the most of the technology. All staff members are also challenged to create and update their class blog, building this into an interactive and engaging window between home and school.

My personal goal in relation to enhancing ICT teaching and learning is to produce excitement about the new tools we are using and provide concrete examples and resources for teachers. Sharing my discoveries and ideas with other teachers has reminded me of the power of simple ideas and colleague’s ideas and questions about tools I am introducing have encouraged me to examine the pros and cons of my decisions more robustly.

[**http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsVlLLSmc5o**](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsVlLLSmc5o)

**Community**

Every class within the school has a blog, which is run and maintained by the classroom teacher. Blogs include links to curriculum supporting websites, home learning and class notices, collections of task related video and audio clips, the latest class news, student work, and student ideas and discussions, particularly within inquiry using tools such as Wallwisher, Answergarden and Voicethread.

[**http://mrmaloney.edublogs.org**](http://mrmaloney.edublogs.org)

[**http://misspitts.edublogs.org**](http://misspitts.edublogs.org)

Parents and students are accessing class blogs regularly, as evidenced by the high numbers on our blog hit counters. They have become an integral and habitual part of our daily classroom life and a great showcase for our school and students.

What we would like to see and what I am encouraging as part of my home learning is a systematic and regular commentary on the blogs by family and friends. Currently the comments and feedback are sporadic and for us to get the full value out of our blogs we need them to become a regular two-way point of contact for our community.

[**http://mrmaloney.edublogs.org/2011/05/10/class-art/#comments**](http://mrmaloney.edublogs.org/2011/05/10/class-art/#comments)

[**http://mrmaloney.edublogs.org/2011/05/08/colour-in-advertising/#comments**](http://mrmaloney.edublogs.org/2011/05/08/colour-in-advertising/#comments)

[**http://mrmaloney.edublogs.org/2011/05/04/questions/#comments**](http://mrmaloney.edublogs.org/2011/05/04/questions/#comments)